

The Lost Road

"Now," he would tell himself, "she is in her cart in front of the post-office, and while they sort the morning mail she gossips with the fisher folks, the summer folks, the grooms, and chauffeurs. Now she is sitting for her portrait to Stedman" (he did not dwell long on that part of her day), "and now she is at tennis, or, as she promised, riding alone at sunset down our lost road through the woods."

But that part of her day from which Lee hurried was that part over which the girl herself lingered. As he turned his eyes from his canvas to meet hers, Stedman, the charming, the deferential, the adroit, who never allowed his painting to interrupt his talk, told her of what he was pleased to call his dreams and ambitions, of the great and beautiful ladies who had sat before his easel, and of the only one of them who had given him inspiration. Especially of the only one who had given him inspiration. With her always to uplift him, he could become one of the world's most famous artists, and she would go down into history as the beautiful woman who had helped him, as the wife of Rembrandt had inspired Rembrandt, as "Mona Lisa" had made Leonardo.

Gilbert wrote: "It is not the lover who comes to woo, but the lover's *way* of wooing!" His suc-